

THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

September 11, 2001, started out as a beautiful day across most of the eastern United States. Blue skies and pleasant temperatures carried the hint of fall even as summer lingered. At 8:46 A.M. American Airlines Flight 11 slammed into the 96th floor of the 110-story North Tower of New York's World Trade Center, spewing out 20,000 gallons of aviation fuel that ignited in a firebomb nearly 2,000°F. As horrified Americans watched the unfolding tragedy on television, United Airlines Flight 175 slammed into the twin South Tower sixteen minutes later, creating yet another inferno on its 80th floor. Firefighters and police rushed to the rescue of what might have been upward of 50,000 employees later in the day. Soon hundreds and then thousands were streaming away from the doomed buildings and their neighbors. The 110,000 tons of steel, concrete, and impedimenta above the point of impact on the South Tower proved too much to bear by 9:59, and it collapsed from 110 stories to 150 feet of rubble. Within thirty minutes the North Tower collapsed as well.

At the Pentagon, crisis action teams were just standing up to deal with the emerging catastrophe when American Airlines Flight 77 roared into the western face of that squat building at 9:38 with somewhat less effect because of the Pentagon's formidable construction. Over the next several hours details would emerge of yet another plane, United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed under mysterious circumstances into a field in Pennsylvania. A total of 2,435 workers, 343 firemen, and 23 policemen died in the Twin Towers and another 125 employees and servicemen in the Pentagon.

Well before details became clear, Americans surmised that they had been attacked by a clever and ruthless adversary. A chilling story emerged: In a well-organized scheme each plane had been seized by a team of five (in one case four) terrorists armed with plastic weapons and purporting to be passengers. These imposters had overwhelmed the crews, substituted one of their own for each pilot, and flown into

their chosen targets. The exception was United Airlines Flight 93. The passengers on this somewhat later flight had learned by cellular phones of the fate of earlier hijacked aircraft. Popular conjecture holds that some passengers attempted to regain control. In the resulting tumult, the plane crashed headlong into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The 33 passengers, 7 crewmembers, and 4 hijackers died together, but the unknown target was spared. Americans had their first heroes, and martyrs, in what President George W. Bush would soon label the Global War on Terrorism. They also had a new date that would live in infamy: “9-11.”

Homeland Security

The Army was heavily involved from the beginning of the crisis. Time-honored tradition looks upon the Army National Guard as heir to the militia for state governors under duress. When New York Governor George Pataki declared a state of emergency, Adjutant General Thomas P. Maguire ordered 8,000 guardsmen to report for state active duty. New York Guard soldiers had already been gathering in their armories. By the evening of September 11, 1,500 were already at Ground Zero, as the World Trade Center catastrophe site came to be called; the rest were en route to duty stations.

The initial role of these National Guardsmen is best described as military support to civilian authority. They quickly reinforced the hard-pressed New York City Police with respect to traffic control and security; their uniforms and disciplined demeanor had a calming presence on the public. As equipment arrived, guardsmen provided civil engineering support, assisted with debris tagging and removal, established shelter and lodging, coordinated transportation, and facilitated logistical support. Over time they picked up such additional taskings as escorting official visitors, managing relief donations, moving mail, checking credentials, facilitating stress management, providing medical support, and serving as honor guards for memorial services. The guardsmen’s special mix of military and civilian skills, complemented by organization and discipline, make them an invaluable asset for local authorities facing an emergency.

At the Pentagon site, the involvement of soldiers was even more immediate, since so many were either victims or impromptu first responders. Many heroically rescued comrades from smoke and flame or unearthed them from the debris. Firemen, paramedics, police, and rescue personnel from the surrounding communities began arriving within minutes; soon patches of open ground west of the Pentagon organized into a relatively orderly array of triage and treatment areas, emergency medical response staging areas, and an



Ground Zero symbolizes the 9-11 terrorist attacks, as the USS Arizona had the attack on Pearl Harbor nearly sixty years before.

air evacuation site. No one present had expected to see such carnage at the Pentagon, but many had worked through carnage at other times and places. Casualties were evacuated, survival assistance officers appointed, families notified, and about a tenth of the building sealed off as unusable and under investigation as a crime scene. Symbolizing the resilience of the American people, the following day soldiers from the Military District of Washington draped their huge garrison flag, an outsized American flag measuring twenty by forty feet, beside the gaping wound; the rest of the building went on with the business of national defense. There would be tearful memorial services to come but no pause in the war others had started.

Military support to civilian authority has been but one Army role historically associated with homeland security. Others have included rear-area security, border security, civil defense, controlling domestic disturbances, internment, humanitarian relief, and economic intervention (seizing factories). The immediate reaction after the September 11 attacks was to reinforce local authorities in relief and security, but broader responses soon emerged. During World War II the entire continental United States had been treated as a combatant rear area wherein 16,007 factories and other strategic sites were secured by their own employees assisted by 200,000 auxiliary military policemen and 160,000 state guardsmen. In 2001's new war, civilian airports seemed the most vulnerable facilities; and 6,000 guardsmen under state control fanned out to assist in securing 444 of them in fifty-four states and territories. Another 3,000 guardsmen under state control assisted in securing waterways, harbors, nuclear power plants, dams, power generator facilities, tunnels, bridges, and rail stations. This was no small task, since the Corps of Engineers alone manages 12,000 miles of commercial waterways, 925 harbors, and 276 locks. An additional 14,000 from the reserve components were mobilized to assist in securing facilities and installations on federal property. Some of these manpower commitments diminished over time, as when the Transportation Security Administration assumed responsibility for the airports.

Some homeland security taskings were episodic. In 2002 the Army assisted in securing the Super Bowl, the Winter Olympics, the Winter Paralympics, meetings of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, and the World Economic Forum. The Olympics alone required the services of 5,000 guardsmen.

Border security had not been a military responsibility for most of the twentieth century, but the war on drugs had reintroduced the military to assisting in that role. In 1989 Congress designated the Department of Defense (DOD) as the lead agency for detecting the air and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Shortly afterward, it stood up Joint



Two days after the attack on the Pentagon, investigators take a break. Inside, search and rescue efforts continue.

Task Force 6 (JTF-6) in Texas to assist with aerial reconnaissance, border surveillance, dive operations, intelligence analysis, construction, transportation, communications, canine support, and other types of support wherein military skills would be useful. JTF-6 had been a small headquarters with the manpower equivalent of two or three battalions customarily attached. After 9-11 national attention to border security radically increased and broadened beyond the emphasis on drugs. Over 1,500 more soldiers deployed to assist the U.S. Border Patrol, the U.S. Customs Service, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 did limit their role to indirect, nevertheless valuable, support.

The greatest single fear the terrorists inspired was that they would somehow acquire weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological, or nuclear—and unleash them against the citizens of the United States. President Bush's administration had already reenergized investments in ballistic missile defense. The systems under design were oriented against missile launches from rogue states, however. What if nonstate terrorists smuggled a weapon of mass destruction into the country undetected? The Army had been responsible for elaborate civil defense efforts throughout much of the Cold War, though emphasis had waned after the Antiballistic Missile Treaty with the Soviet Union in 1972.

By the late 1990s fanatical terrorists rather than calculating Soviets seemed the more plausible threat, and the Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1997 established the Domestic Preparedness Training Initiative within the Department of Defense. This envisioned soldiers training local law enforcement authorities in preparation for chemical, biological, or nuclear attack and offering other assistance with respect to such possible events as appropriate. Mass casualty exercises involving soldiers, police, firefighters, medical personnel, and other first responders with scores of volunteers playing victims became a common sight in towns and cities around the United States. Not all the support was for training alone; the Army Reserves' 310th Chemical Company provided

biological integrated detection system (BIDS) early warning at the 2002 Winter Olympics, for example.

The Army's homeland security responsibilities after 9-11 were superimposed on a continuing expectation that soldiers would remain available to assist their fellow citizens in cases of natural disaster. The National Guard in particular provides state and local governments readily available, disciplined manpower with inherent command, control, transportation, and support. Specialized skills and equipment for engineering, debris removal, water purification, messing, and medical support can be particularly useful when any form of disaster strikes. There is ample precedent for the Army's fielding as many as 30,000 soldiers at a time nationwide for humanitarian relief.



In the wake of 9-11, National Guardsmen augment security at airports across the United States.

The post-9-11 period was no exception to this recurrent yet unpredictable aspect of homeland security.

A few homeland security tasks that had historically come the way of the Army were not features of the Army's post-9-11 environment. The Army was not asked to intern enemy aliens. No specific nation was identified as enemy, and individuals suspected of terrorism or violations of immigration policies were few enough in number to render Army involvement unnecessary. There were no domestic disturbances associated with the disaster: the American people seemed more united than ever. There was no expectation of economic intervention or reconstruction on the part of the Army, with the exception of the Pentagon. Here, the Corps of Engineers took charge of a challenging project to rebuild and restore the shattered section of the building within a year of the attack. They met this timeline, and the newly rebuilt portions of the Pentagon reopened with ceremony and fanfare—and with the same large garrison flag hanging alongside the restored facade.

It had been some time since Americans had been attacked on their own soil, so there was understandable confusion with respect to who was in charge of what. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) had supervised defense against aerospace strategic weapons, while the Army had been the DOD Executive Agent for military support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Shortly after the 9-11 attacks Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld reiterated and refined these arrangements, making the Joint Forces Command responsible for the land and maritime defense of the continental United States and appointing the Secretary of the Army the DOD Executive Agent for Homeland Security, including homeland security and military support to civilian authority. Homeland security implied the direct application of military forces with DOD as the federal government's lead agency, whereas military support to civilian authority encompassed supporting the lead of local officials or other



September 11, *Henrietta Snowden, 2001*

REBUILDING THE PENTAGON

When Flight 77 slammed into the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the first portion of a twenty-year renovation project had recently been completed. Much of the section the aircraft hit had been reinforced with a Geotech antiframegmentation panel and featured blast-resistant windows. Under Lee Evey, Program Manager for the Pentagon Renovation, building contractors quickly reoriented to rebuilding the shattered corridors. Three thousand workers, some laboring around the clock, cleared 50,000 tons of debris and quickly repaired the outer three rings of the building. Named Project PHOENIX, the rebuilding exceeded expectations; by September 11, 2002, the once-wrecked portion was open for business.

federal agencies. These arrangements proved satisfactory for the time being. In due course, President Bush proposed and Congress approved the reorganization of many different federal agencies involved in homeland security into a single overarching Department of Homeland Security. As this book is written, the Department of Defense is still working out its relationships with this new agency.

Afghanistan: The War against the Taliban and al Qaeda

Even as the World Trade Center still smoldered and the first rush to reinforce homeland security was on, American intelligence ascertained that Osama bin Laden's shadowy Islamic extremist al Qaeda (literally "the base") terrorist network had organized the devastating 9-11 attacks. Al Qaeda was ferociously hostile to Israel and to the American presence in the Middle East, and was already suspected of numerous attacks, including the spectacular and deadly car bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the suicide ramming of the USS *Cole* in Yemen in 2000. The American response to these attacks had been cruise missile strikes against suspected terrorist training camps in Afghanistan so ineffectual they seemed to reinforce a smug sense of invulnerability within the al Qaeda leadership.

Al Qaeda had reason to feel smug. Their worldwide network of cells and supporters was so secretive as to evade detection, and their base of operations comfortably tucked into the protection of Afghanistan's pathologically fundamentalist Taliban regime. The Taliban had emerged victorious in vicious factional fighting following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. Their brutally strict regime offered safe haven to some of the world's most deadly Islamic terrorists.

Neither the Taliban nor al Qaeda fielded standing armed forces in the modern sense. Taliban leaders surrounded themselves with a core of experienced fighters to which further volunteers and conscripts were added in times of strife. Recruitment generally followed clan and ethnic lines, though several concentrations of foreign troops who shared their religious views were present as well. Of these the estimated 7,000 or so Pakistanis were the most numerous, and the 3,000 or so multinational al Qaeda the most deadly. Perhaps 20,000 additional fighters constituted the core of the Taliban proper; and the regime was able to field as many as 50,000 for major operations. The Taliban had taken over a considerable inventory of Soviet heavy equipment when they seized Afghanistan, but it was not in good shape and they did not use it well. Their preferred tactical unit was ten or so militiamen armed with assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) mounted in the back of pickup trucks with heavy machine-guns mounted over the cabs. Swarms of these sped through the countryside, terrorizing the civilian population or fighting a fluid war of movement as circumstances might require.

Opposition to the Taliban within Afghanistan came from a loose coalition of tribal adversaries alienated by the Taliban's heavy-handed methods and its domination by Afghan's majority ethnic Pashtun. Their United Front, or Northern Alliance (NA), included ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras led by their own warlords and reinforced by semi-professional leftovers from the old regime and anti-Soviet *Mujahideen*

(literally “holy warriors”). The Northern Alliance fielded a core of perhaps 10,000 fighters and controlled about 10 percent of the country in the north and northeast. Guerrillas associated with the Northern Alliance operated in much of northern Afghanistan, taking advantage of both the rugged nature of the country and of increasing resentment against Taliban rule.

An American air and missile campaign against the Taliban began on October 7, 2001, heralding the start of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. That evening 25 fighters from 2 aircraft carriers, 15 long-range bombers, and 50 cruise missiles struck airfields, air defenses, and purported command and control facilities. At the same time two C-17s dropped 37,500 humanitarian daily rations into Afghanistan to reinforce the point that the campaign was against the Taliban regime and not the Afghan people.

The initial air and missile strikes seem to have been no more effective than their predecessors in 1998 had been. There were simply too few discrete high-value strategic targets in Afghanistan critical to the grip of the Taliban regime, with the possible exception of the lives of the leaders themselves. This ineffectualness changed quickly beginning October 19, when several 12-man American Special Forces Operational Detachment A Teams helicoptered through difficult mountains in the darkness to link up with the leaders of the Northern Alliance. Soon there would be 18 A Teams plus 4 company-level (B Teams) and 3 battalion-level command units (C Teams) in Afghanistan, about 300 soldiers all told.

The arrival of Special Forces teams had a dramatic effect on the fortunes of the Northern Alliance. Almost overnight its tactical circumstances transformed from desperate inferiority to an overwhelming firepower advantage. The Special Forces teams accompanied the tribal warriors by foot, in pickups, or even on horseback, carrying with them the reach-back capabilities of satellite communications. Armed with laser designators and state-of-the-art optics and global positioning system (GPS) technology, they brought in precision-guided munitions (PGMs) on one target after another. PGMs were considerably less expensive than they had been during DESERT STORM and could be delivered en masse from the bellies of B-1 and B-52 bombers as readily as from nimbler fighter-bombers. Absolute air supremacy and artfully positioned air-to-air refueling tankers enabled supporting aircraft to loiter while targets were being sorted out and then to strike with deadly effect. Because the PGMs were cheap, small knots of troops or individual bunkers were cost-effective as targets; and entire lines of defense were immolated by cascades of precisely directed 2,000-lb. bombs. The 2,000-lb. bomb was the workhorse munition but not the upper limit; that distinction went to the monster 15,000-lb. BLU-82 “Daisy Cutter” introduced into the campaign on November 5. What was seen was hit, and what was hit was killed.

Although American manpower on the ground within Afghanistan itself was by design tiny, by November over 50,000 service personnel



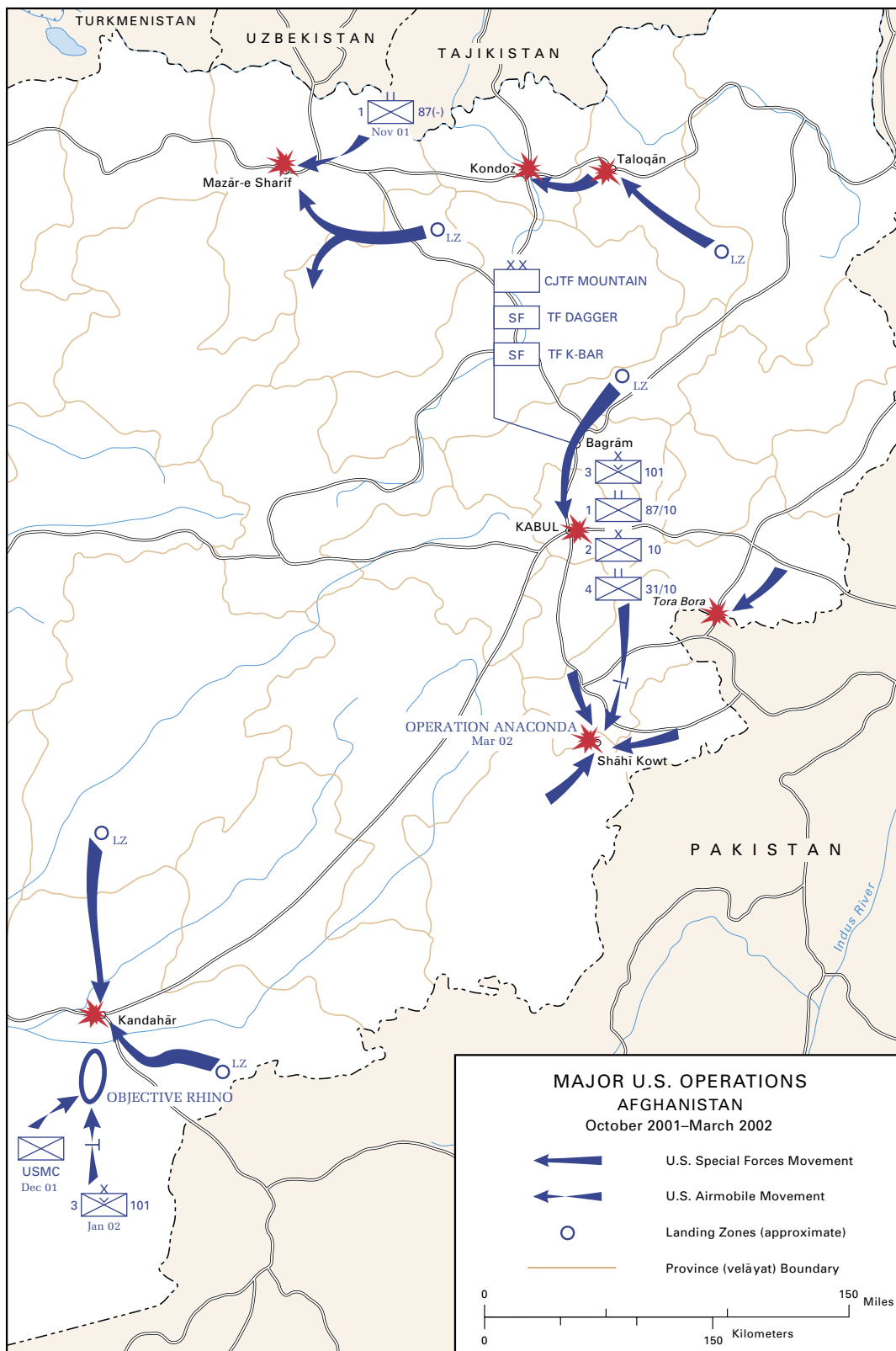
Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Leaflets, 2002

were in the theater and associated with the campaign. Of these, half were at sea manning the ships providing carrier air strikes and seaborne cruise missiles. About 2,000 soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division secured Karshi Khanabad Air Base in Uzbekistan; while 3,000 more service personnel, including a battalion of rangers, staged out of Oman. Detachments helped secure air bases and other facilities in Pakistan as well, while about 400 aircraft were based in the region. From time to time these forces intervened directly in the ground fighting, as was the case in a spectacular televised ranger parachute assault on October 19, 2001, into a compound belonging to Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar; but more often they guaranteed the unrelenting flow of air and logistical support to the predominantly Afghan fighters on the ground. The Muslim leaders of Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and Oman had taken some risks to cooperate with the American campaign; it was important that American forces be viewed as assisting in a national liberation rather than invading a nation.

The fighting in Afghanistan fractured into several miniature campaigns as each allied Afghan warlord advanced on his own objectives, carefully protecting the tiny contingent of Americans who gave him such awesome firepower. (*Map 31*) In the north, Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum pounded his way into Mazar-e Sharif behind a curtain of American 2,000-lb. bombs. In the west, warlord Ismail Khan liberated Herat to the delight of his local followers. In the northeast, Generals Fahim Khan and Bismullah Khan, Tajik successors to slain NA leader Shah Ahmed Masoud, followed up on massive air strikes to break through a protracted stalemate that had developed around Bagram Airfield. Capitalizing on U.S. air support, they next rushed into Kabul when the Taliban unexpectedly abandoned that capital city. Not far away, the NA forces also seized the city of Taloqan handily and then fought a see-saw battle around Konduz—to include infighting between Taliban who wanted to surrender and al Qaeda who did not—until that city finally fell after a twelve-day siege. In the far east, Haji Abdul Qadir captured Jalalabad the day after the Northern Alliance entered Kabul. The loosely cobbled-together Northern Alliance then controlled half of Afghanistan.

As heartening as the speedy liberation of northern Afghanistan was, it raised the risk of permanently alienating the Pashtun south if a Pashtun face could not be associated with the process of liberation. Fortunately, two Pashtun expatriate leaders, Hamid Karzai and Gul Agha Sharzai, had infiltrated Afghanistan after the onset of the fighting to raise adherents of their own and take on the Taliban. Karzai based himself north and Sharzai south of Kandahar, the most important city of the Pashtun south and the spiritual home of the Taliban.

Karzai's experience with Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA)-574 illustrates the teamwork that developed between tribal militias and Special Forces operatives. Karzai had been deputy foreign minister in the pre-Taliban government and had returned to Uruzgan Province north of Kandahar to rally opposition to the Taliban. The twelve-man Special Forces team commanded by Capt. Jason Amerine accompanied him to help him organize and to procure equipment and ammunition. When Karzai took possession of the town of Tarin Kowt, 110 kilometers north of Kandahar, the Taliban awoke to the



Map 31

SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIONAL DETACHMENT A

Special Forces units that served in Afghanistan were built around twelve-man teams of soldiers trained in unconventional warfare. A captain (18A) and warrant officer (180A) generally led the team. Typically, the other members were team sergeant (18Z), 2 weapons specialists (18B), 2 engineers (18C), 2 medics (18D), 2 communicators (18E), and an operations/intelligence expert (18F). Most teams in Afghanistan were augmented with Air Force tactical air controllers to aid in providing close air support. Special Forces, area oriented and language trained, were specially configured for missions behind enemy lines and the ideal force for operations in Afghanistan.



*Hamid Karzai (Middle Row, Third from Left)
and Special Forces*

danger his insurgency posed and dispatched about eighty vehicles and 500 troops to crush him. Captain Amerine, protected by several dozen of Karzai's men, set up his laser target acquisition equipment on a ridge overlooking the approach to Tarin Kowt. When the Taliban column swung into view, he locked onto the lead truck and guided a bomb from a carrier-based Navy F-14 Tomcat onto a spot between its headlights. The truck disappeared in a horrific explosion, killing all aboard it and demolishing the anti-aircraft gun it was carrying for fire support. Amerine repeated this performance along the length of the valley, displacing from one position to another as tactical circumstances required.

Meanwhile, Karzai's men defending Tarin Kowt proper had beaten off a flanking attack that had attempted to encircle the town. As the Taliban attempted to break contact, Amerine's men continued to hammer them with laser-guided munitions. The Taliban, who had expected an easy win, left behind about 300 dead and over thirty destroyed vehicles. Needless to say, Karzai's men were favorably impressed with the lethality of their newfound allies; and this battlefield success radically enhanced NA recruiting. Karzai's offensive rolled on toward Kandahar as an ever-increasing torrent of armed men carefully positioning their precious Americans to overwatch positions whenever a few precisely delivered bombs might best be used.

One aspect of the campaign that required the Americans to adjust was the extraordinarily negotiable aspect of Afghan warfare. Adversaries often knew each other personally, in many cases were related, and shamelessly communicated with and offered deals to each other during the course of the fighting. Radio traffic exchanging interpersonal bluster and family news alternated with calls for fire and the coordination of troop movements. The tactical bartering did have the salutary effect of reducing bloodshed. One side would convince the other that it was totally overmatched: a quietly arranged surrender might well ensue or, more often, the weaker side would fade into the darkness while the

stronger triumphantly took possession of the geographical prize. Fighters who surrendered en masse were seldom searched and segregated and often wandered off the battlefield under their own recognizance or joined their former adversaries after a decent interval. Combat itself could be sharp and vicious and retaliations gruesome, but there often seemed to be a way to talk things out as well.

The rapid collapse of the Taliban had much to do with deals struck by confident warlords newly empowered by American arms, but Afghan habits led to some curious embarrassments as well. Al Qaeda and its Pakistani adherents did not play by the same rules and occasionally bloodily suppressed arrangements worked out among the Afghans. At Konduz, for example, hard-core fighters ambushed NA forces advancing to accept a surrender that had previously been arranged; and in Mazar-e Sharif, Pakistanis gunned down twelve Islamic *Mullahs* sent into their barracks to finalize terms. Loosely secured foreign prisoners staged a spectacular revolt at the Quali Jangi fortress at the end of November that was bloodily suppressed by Afghans and PGMs. Another uprising by armed patients turned a Kandahar hospital into a battle zone in January 2002, long after the rest of the city had been secured. In these cases, Afghan retribution against the foreign fighters was severe.

Perhaps more consequential, however, the much-anticipated surrender of Kandahar turned into a nonevent. Hundreds of Taliban troops with their leader Mohammed Omar simply vanished into the night to make way for Karzai's and Sharzai's triumphant fighters. For weeks thereafter men wearing the black turbans of the Taliban mingled unmolested on the streets with allies of Karzai and the Americans. All things considered, the negotiative aspect of Afghan warfare seems to have worked out better for the Afghan warlords who won with it than it did for the al Qaeda and Pakistanis massacred during its course or for the somewhat baffled Americans.

Osama bin Laden also seems to have slipped the noose presented by encircling Afghan forces. Some time after the fall of Kabul, al Qaeda and Taliban forces fled into the rugged Tora Bora mountains south of Jalalabad. Here, the terrorists had built up stockpiles of weapons, ammunition, and other supplies in hundreds of cave complexes they had heavily fortified. Local anti-Taliban forces under Hazrat Ali undertook to root them out, assisted by several Special Forces teams providing advice and air support. Their advance moved painfully forward over rocky, convoluted terrain between 10,000 and 12,000 feet in altitude. AC-130 Spectre gunships and PGMs proved useful, but the depths of the caves and extremes of relief limited their effectiveness considerably. The enemy fought stubbornly as the terrain he controlled shrank into smaller and smaller pockets over a period of eight days. When the fighting finally sputtered out, hundreds of al Qaeda and Taliban were dead, but even more seemed to have slipped away through the trackless mountains into nearby Pakistan. There is some evidence that bin Laden may have been at Tora Bora; if so, he seems to have been among those who escaped.

By this time, conventional ground forces were present in Afghanistan in increasing numbers. A company from the 10th Mountain Division had deployed from Uzbekistan to assist with the prisoner revolt at Quali Jangi, and marines had arrived to secure facilities southwest of Kandahar shortly before it fell. Other conventional forces soon followed

The enemy fought stubbornly as the terrain he controlled shrank into smaller and smaller pockets over a period of eight days.



Karzai reviews the troops at the first graduation of the Kabul Military Training Center, Afghanistan, July 23, 2002.

to secure the Kandahar airport, Bagram Airfield, facilities in Kabul, and prisoner screening and holding areas. A deployable reserve was established as well. The facility with which Omar, bin Laden, and many of their adherents had eluded capture by encircling Afghan forces suggested the desirability of having tightly disciplined American ground forces to pursue critical targets. The newly allied Afghan warlords seemed receptive to having a modest number of Americans on the ground in Afghanistan pursuing diehard al Qaeda while they themselves went about the business of consolidating their grip on the rest of the country.

On December 11, 2002, Hamid Karzai was sworn in as the Prime Minister of the interim government of Afghanistan during ceremonies held in Kabul. His ascendancy had the general support of both the people and the warlords—the concurrence of the latter having been the result of considerable negotiation. Over the next several weeks a UN International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that would ultimately number about 5,000 soldiers from eighteen nations deployed into Kabul, while an American force of about that size fanned out to work the hinterlands looking for al Qaeda. In seventy-six days of operations a few hundred American special operators and a handful of conventional units supported by 6,500 strike missions expending 17,500 munitions had provided the margin of reinforcement necessary for a Northern Alliance victory over the theretofore dominant Taliban regime. The Global War on Terrorism was by no means over, but at least terrorists were no longer safe in Afghanistan.

Global Operations

The speedy American victory in Afghanistan bolstered operations against terrorism worldwide. President Bush's administration clearly recognized that military operations would be only part, and perhaps a lesser part, of their ultimate success. Effective counterterrorism would require extensive diplomatic, financial, legal, public relations, and per-

haps humanitarian efforts as well. Initiatives within each of these venues were already well under way when the fighting in Afghanistan began, but the overthrow of the Taliban generated intelligence and an atmosphere that reinforced the American hand in each of them. The overthrow also suggested or encouraged further military action.

American diplomatic efforts experienced an immediate groundswell of sympathy throughout most of the world in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, and numerous governments pitched in to help defang al Qaeda. Operatives and fellow travelers were detained in Germany, Spain, Italy, and Great Britain. It turned out that a number of key figures in the attacks had important connections in the permissive and liberal environment of Germany, which cracked down with particular severity. Captured documents and prisoner testimony from Afghanistan facilitated the hunt. In Malaysia, captured materials enabled direct police intervention to break up a pending attack. Muslim nations like Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan took some risks in assisting the United States against the Taliban and went after their own potential terrorists energetically, recognizing that they had already “grabbed the wolf by the ears.” Pakistan in particular made some spectacular arrests of al Qaeda operatives bailing out of Afghanistan.

American operators in central Asia needed and got the tacit approval of Russia and China. These two regional giants had problematic Islamic extremists of their own and were gratified when Americans suddenly found much less to criticize concerning Russian operations in Chechnya or the Chinese handling of their western provinces. A major fraction of the al Qaeda killed or captured in Afghanistan turned out to be Chechnyan in origin, reinforcing Russian views of that unruly province.

Even such previously hostile states as Iran, Syria, the Sudan, and Libya tacitly cooperated with the United States in a calculated sort of way. They seemed inclined to distance themselves from any appearance of affiliation with al Qaeda after the ferocious American attack on those harboring them in Afghanistan.

In Indonesia and Saudi Arabia, historically tepid cooperation with U.S. counterterrorism efforts became suddenly energetic after further spectacular attacks in those two countries. In the case of Indonesia, over two hundred tourists succumbed to a car bombing in Bali. In Saudi Arabia, coordinated strikes on housing areas featuring foreign workers inflamed the government’s ire. In dozens of countries around the world, operations against al Qaeda and their fellow travelers increased, and the success in Afghanistan contributed in one way or another to that acceleration.

In addition to diplomacy, the United States pursued al Qaeda in the financial realm. The 9-11 attackers seem to have been well funded, and al Qaeda operations as a whole demonstrated considerable sophistication in raising money and bankrolling operations worldwide. Funding seems to have originated in bin Laden’s personal fortune—he was scion of a wealthy Saudi family that had made a great deal of money in construction—but had grown well beyond that original source. Al Qaeda had been a major financial backer of the Taliban regime and also may have profited from the drug smuggling so lucrative in otherwise impoverished Afghanistan. Much of al Qaeda’s money moved around in

conventional financial channels, but much also moved through a shadowy network of telephone-connected loaners and creditors labeled *Ha-wala*. Captured documents and prisoner interviews from Afghanistan sharpened the American understanding of al Qaeda financial transactions. Investigators uncovered, for example, a callous and cynical sale of stocks in anticipation of a drop in value when the World Trade Center was attacked. It also seemed that money donated to Muslim charities was diverted into terrorist hands, though the extent and foreknowledge of this remains a matter of dispute. In concert with other nations, the United States set about freezing or seizing known al Qaeda assets and attempted to disrupt suspected sources of income. There is no way to confidently measure the extent of the damage thus done, but it seems to have been considerable.

The most lucrative source of intelligence from Afghanistan was from prisoners caught in the fighting. Their status and disposition, however, raised important legal issues. Conventions relating to prisoners of war had been designed with belligerent nation-states in mind. Upon achieving a treaty or peace, they could be repatriated to their nations. No nation sanctioned al Qaeda, and strong arguments existed that they were simply criminals. If so, in what nation would they account for their crimes and against whose standard would they be judged? What was more, since the Global War on Terrorism was ongoing, could the United States not detain them until its conclusion—indefinitely?

Criminals in the United States are normally charged, afforded due process in defending themselves from a case that is made against them, and, if convicted, given a specific sentence. The United States was willing to turn over most of the prisoners to the Afghans or to their nations of origin for adjudication but decided to keep the most dangerous, knowledgeable, or influential under its own control. The Afghan allies were happy enough to oblige. The United States labeled these prisoners detainees and set about developing its own precedents for handling them. JTF-17 stood up in Guantánamo, Cuba, to house the detainees under circumstances that placed more emphasis on security than on amenities. Sufficient information did not exist to make a case against these individuals in the traditional forensic sense, and the right to confront witnesses who would then be in great danger was out of the question. If trials were to occur, they would be by military tribunal, for which there was some precedent from World War II. By 2003 some 660 detainees were housed in Guantánamo; 1,600 servicemen and women had been dispatched to secure them and exploit them for intelligence. Some of the intelligence drawn from the detainees proved invaluable and allowed timely apprehension of more suspects. The situation became even more complicated when alleged or potential terrorists were apprehended in the United States, the press in various countries of origin became aware of the nationality of their detainees, and the issues of individuals apprehended for violations of immigration laws became muddled with the issue of suspected terrorists.

The uncertain status of the Guantánamo detainees may have caused some public relations issues for the United States, but the far greater issue was to assure that a war against Islamic terrorists was not interpreted as a war against Islam itself. Within days of the September 11 attacks, President Bush appeared among American Muslim congre-

gations to make the point that they too shared the common enemy of terrorism and that religion was not the issue. Educators and commentators went to some lengths to distinguish between the benign tolerance of mainstream Islamic traditions and contemporary extremists who were characterized as having hijacked a virtuous religion for their own evil purposes. Diplomats consciously courted Muslim counterparts to help them emphasize a spirit of cooperation against Islamic terrorism, and one Muslim nation after another demonstrated by its actions that it concurred. Even television and advertising got into the act. Popular shows such as “West Wing” and “Law and Order” aired episodes distinguishing evil terrorists from virtuous Muslims, and President Bush directly engaged a public relations firm to improve the image of America in the Muslim world. All things considered, the effort to separate Islamic terrorism from Islam itself seems to have gone reasonably well. Within the United States, relatively few hate crimes were perpetrated against Muslim citizens or visitors and nothing remotely resembling the abuse and incarceration of Japanese Americans in World War II emerged. Overseas, calls for *jihad* against Americans and Westerners gained relatively little momentum and produced truly dangerous circumstances sporadically rather than generally.

Counterinsurgency and counterterrorist doctrine had long held that there needed to be a carrot as well as a stick in conducting operations; the catch phrase, “draining the swamp,” gained popularity among those envisioning a way ahead. The swamp described those countries or regions of the world where poverty, injustice, abuse, and instability drove people to desperation and to identification with the terrorists. Humanitarian intervention to ameliorate such circumstances seemed an appropriate way to drain the swamp. In Afghanistan itself, growing American troop strength afforded the opportunity to divert some efforts to humanitarian relief, and a civil affairs battalion was an important part of the force structure from an early date.

Perhaps even more important was the work done by the United Nations and nongovernmental agencies when the security environment was sufficiently permissive to allow them to go about their work. As the international, largely NATO, peacekeeping force matured in Kabul and an Afghan army and police force began to take shape, the security of efforts to refurbish the impoverished country became a primary emphasis. American forces shared their concern and energetically pursued Taliban and al Qaeda remnants. A striking example of this kind of support to humanitarian relief was presented by the death of Mullah Satar. Satar, a relatively minor Taliban-sympathetic thug, shot and killed an Ecuadorian relief worker, a water engineer named Ricardo Munguia. This was the first overt case of an International Committee of the Red Cross employee in post-Taliban Afghanistan consciously killed for the good he was trying to do. In an operation best described as implacable, American special operators strained every intelligence resource available to reliably locate Satar and then gunned him and his adherents down during a spectacular air assault on the village of Safi during the night. Their message was clear.

Recognizing the critical diplomatic, financial, legal, public relations, and humanitarian aspects of the Global War on Terrorism, soldiers nevertheless discovered that there was ample ground fighting yet

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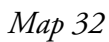
to do. In Afghanistan, the search for diehard al Qaeda and Taliban continued, with a particular emphasis on the eastern mountains along the Pakistani border. Operation ANACONDA, conducted from March 2–19, 2002, proved particularly ambitious, challenging, and rewarding. Reports indicated a residual concentration of about 200 al Qaeda and Taliban fighters congregating in the Shahi Kowt Valley, over a mile above sea level in rugged mountains proximate to Pakistan. (*Map 32*) When the allies attempted to sweep these remnants into a trap defined by helicopter-delivered American blocking positions in the mountains to the east that would pick off escapees from a major allied Afghan thrust from the west, major fighting ensued. It turned out that the al Qaeda and Taliban fighters numbered closer to 1,000 in well-defended positions supported by elaborate cave complexes featuring huge stockpiles of arms and ammunition. Helicopters labored heavily in the thin mountain air, as did troops struggling to take the battle to the enemy across frozen, rocky ground.

Overcoming initial surprise and embarrassment, the allies piled on. Ultimately some 1,200 Americans; 2,000 friendly Afghans; and 200 Australian, Canadian, Danish, German, and Norwegian special operators were into the fight, supported by over 2,500 bombs. They killed about half their adversaries, while the other half seems to have exfiltrated to further mountain hiding places or into Pakistan. Warfare in eastern Afghanistan became a grim round of patrols and operations in the mountains to keep al Qaeda and Taliban remnants off balance and under pressure while a new Afghan army was equipped and trained, relief efforts stabilized the economy and society, and Karzai's government established a grip. Occasionally, Americans and their allies were ambushed, sniped at, mortared, or rocketed; but the quality of intelligence available to the Americans improved over time and they ground their adversaries down, a few guerrillas or arms caches at a time.

Military success in Afghanistan inspired military efforts elsewhere. The most immediate need was to preclude Pakistan from becoming a refuge for guerrillas operating in Afghanistan. Particular risks existed in the so-called tribal regions, wherein the population was inclined to favor the largely Pashtun Taliban and the mandate of the Pakistani central government never ran strong anyway. The Pakistanis were very sensitive about visible American involvement in their country, yet the hundreds of miles of mountainous border was virtually impossible to police. Fortunately, the tribesmen were not particularly partial to the largely Arab al Qaeda and the Pakistani hand could be reinforced by largely invisible assistance from American Special Operations Forces. Workable, cooperative cross-border arrangements emerged with time, and soon the Pakistanis were apprehending guerrillas in flight from the Americans and their Afghan allies.

Thousands of miles away in the Philippines, fanatic Abu Sayyaf Islamic militants seemed another dangerous source of potential terror. Hostile and separatist at least since the Moro Wars in the early twentieth century, Islamic extremists had waxed and waned in their defiance of central government over the years. Recently they had taken to piracy, theft, and kidnapping for ransom to fund their agendas and had acquired demonstrable links to international terrorism. Indeed, they were heavily implicated in a barely failed plot to simultaneously destroy a

Warfare in eastern Afghanistan became a grim round of patrols and operations in the mountains to keep al Qaeda and Taliban remnants off balance and under pressure while a new Afghan army was equipped and trained.



dozen aircraft over the Pacific. Conscious of Filipino sensibilities, the United States undertook logistical, intelligence, and training support to the Philippine Army in its post-9-11 efforts to crush Abu Sayyaf. Combined “training” operations on a battalion scale in the midst of territory theretofore dominated by the Abu Sayyaf became an important feature of this renewed cooperation. Similarly, the U.S. Army and Special Forces greatly expanded their logistical, training, and intelligence cooperation with numerous Muslim nations such as Oman, Yemen, Djibouti, Indonesia, and Jordan to reinforce their hands against the mutual threat of terrorism. Most of these military-to-military relationships had al-

ready existed, and some were quite mature; but 9-11 lent them a special urgency insofar as the United States was concerned.

Back to Iraq

Since the liberation of Kuwait in DESERT STORM, Saddam Hussein's Iraq had remained a nagging threat to American security. Many expected Saddam to be overthrown in the aftermath of his overwhelming defeat, but in the absence of a sustained American military presence he had bloodily suppressed his internal adversaries and remained in power. Tens of thousands of Shiites and Kurds were murdered, and a police state already consciously modeled on that of Stalin became even worse. His internal brutality was matched by external belligerence; time and again he demonstrated against or bullied Kuwait, defied disarmament obligations under the terms of the cease-fire, and fired on allied aircraft enforcing a no-fly zone in northern and southern Iraq. He seems to have been involved in an attempt to assassinate President George H. W. Bush in 1993 and ultimately forced UN weapons inspectors out of the country in 1998. The new Bush administration expressed great concern that he would further develop weapons of mass destruction—he had already employed chemical munitions against the Kurds—and either use them himself or pass them along to international terrorists. Either prospect would be horrific.

Shortly after 9-11, Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki had directed the Army to assume a wartime footing, with all other priorities being of lesser import. Every effort was made to bring units to full strength, and every division and cavalry regiment ascertained its preparedness to fight a war that had not yet been decided upon with a force list that had not yet been specified. War plans for Iraq came and went, and commanders likely to be involved war-gamed the plans separately and together. Key leadership was psychologically prepared and units physically prepared for Iraq even before they knew of a decision to go, and such in-theater investments as a state-of-the-art command and control facility in Qatar and a fuel farm on the Iraqi border furthered that preparation.

For all his bluster, Saddam's capacity for conventional warfare had dramatically declined since his invasion of Kuwait. UN sanctions and a weapons embargo had dried up his access to modern arms and spare parts. Rather than the 950,000 troops, 5,000 tanks, and 800 combat aircraft of 1990, he mustered 280,000 troops, 2,200 tanks, and virtually no combat aircraft in 2003. The equipment was poorly maintained and the troops demoralized. Postwar interviews suggest that discipline was maintained by fear. Iraqi soldiers tell of being tortured and abused and, if they deserted or went absent without official leave, of their families' being incarcerated or beaten. The regular army was in tatters, though the elite *Republican Guard* was somewhat better.

Hussein recognized his weakness and seems to have been inspired by America's Somalia experience in planning his way ahead should the allies attack. The regular army would be considerably reinforced by the irregular *Fedayeen* and by the *Special Republican Guard* operating as special operations forces. He would take maximum advantage of the urban terrain, ambush, surprise, and proximity to civilian targets.

Key leadership was psychologically prepared and units physically prepared for Iraq even before they knew of a decision to go.

Pickups modified with machine guns and RPGs, the Iraqi version of the Somali “technical,” would allow for speedy movement and appreciable firepower. *Fedayeen* and Baathists hiding among the population would use terrorism to discourage cooperation with allied authorities. If the regular army could preoccupy units leading the allied advance, the *Fedayeen* could strike its vulnerable rear, increasing American casualties. If eighteen men killed in a Mogadishu firefight had precipitated an American withdrawal from Somalia, how much easier would it be to force a withdrawal from a challenge as complex as Baghdad?

In the aftermath of the 9-11 attacks, Americans were perhaps less averse to casualties than they had been; certainly, the stakes were higher. President Bush decided a regime change in Iraq was necessary, in part because of the potential threat of weapons of mass destruction in Iraqi hands but also because of potential Iraqi links with international terrorists, Iraq’s continuing threat to the stability of the Middle East, and a sentiment that Saddam Hussein represented unfinished business. Not all of America’s allies perceived Hussein as an imminent threat; many argued instead for granting more time to UN weapons inspectors whom Hussein, under pressure, had recently readmitted. Bitter wrangling ensued in the United Nations and elsewhere as the United States and Britain insisted on speedy intervention and other major powers declined to support such a notion. Perhaps most consequential, at the eleventh hour the Turkish parliament refused to allow the U.S. 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) to move through Turkey en route to establishing a front in northern Iraq. This obviated a major feature of the preferred war plan, left the division’s equipment out of play as it hastily transshipped from standing offshore from Turkey to Kuwait, and perturbed deployment schedules because the ships carrying 4th Infantry Division equipment were not available for other purposes for a prolonged period of time.

The theater commander, General Tommy R. Franks, and his ground component commander, Lt. Gen. David D. McKiernan, faced a quandary as combat operations became imminent. With approximately 200,000 ground troops available in theater at the time—as opposed to the 600,000 of DESERT STORM—they did not enjoy massive and overwhelming ground combat force. With the Turkish option gone, their conventional ground attack would have to originate in Kuwait and progress 300 miles to Baghdad, and then perhaps 200 more to the vital oil fields around Mosul. On hand in Kuwait they had but a single American heavy division, the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized); an equivalent number of marines with some M1A1 tanks but including the awkward Amtrack as troop carriers; and a British force built up around the U.K. 7th Armoured Division. Lighter forces included the 101st Air Assault Division, two brigades of the 82d Airborne Division, the 11th Aviation Group, and a fistful of smaller units. This seemed a small force considering the challenges involved. The force did, however, have 1,600 combat aircraft in theater as compared to DESERT STORM’s 2,100, representing an air force proportionally much closer in size to that of the earlier war. Conventional wisdom held that combat operations would begin with a prolonged air campaign while the 4th Infantry Division made its way to Kuwait and then its newly freed shipping opened up a flow of follow-on heavy divisions.



General Franks examines a weapons cache that the 101st Airborne Division discovered in Najaf.

General Franks was not partial to waiting, and not just because to do so would mean operating in the terrible heat of the Iraqi summer. In his mind mass was firepower more so than troops; and, as we have seen, the widespread availability of inexpensive joint direct-attack munitions (JDAMs) had radically increased the effectiveness of his firepower. The Afghan experience convinced him that he could drive jointness to the lowest possible level and that a brigade supported by JDAMs could do what it had taken several to achieve before. What was more, the Iraqis were probably expecting a lengthy air campaign and perhaps anticipated time to redeploy their forces from northern Iraq to keep pace with the redeployment of the 4th Infantry Division. One of General Franks' contingency plans envisioned a rolling start, wherein he began the campaign with modest forces already on hand and fed in reinforcements as they arrived, if they were needed. Iraqi dispositions and circumstances did not suggest significant resistance much south of Baghdad, so why not sweep up relatively uncontested terrain with a lesser force and feed in further forces as they arrived?

Factors beyond JDAMs and strategic surprise argued for the rolling start. In effect the United States had already waged a prolonged air campaign. Time and again since DESERT STORM the

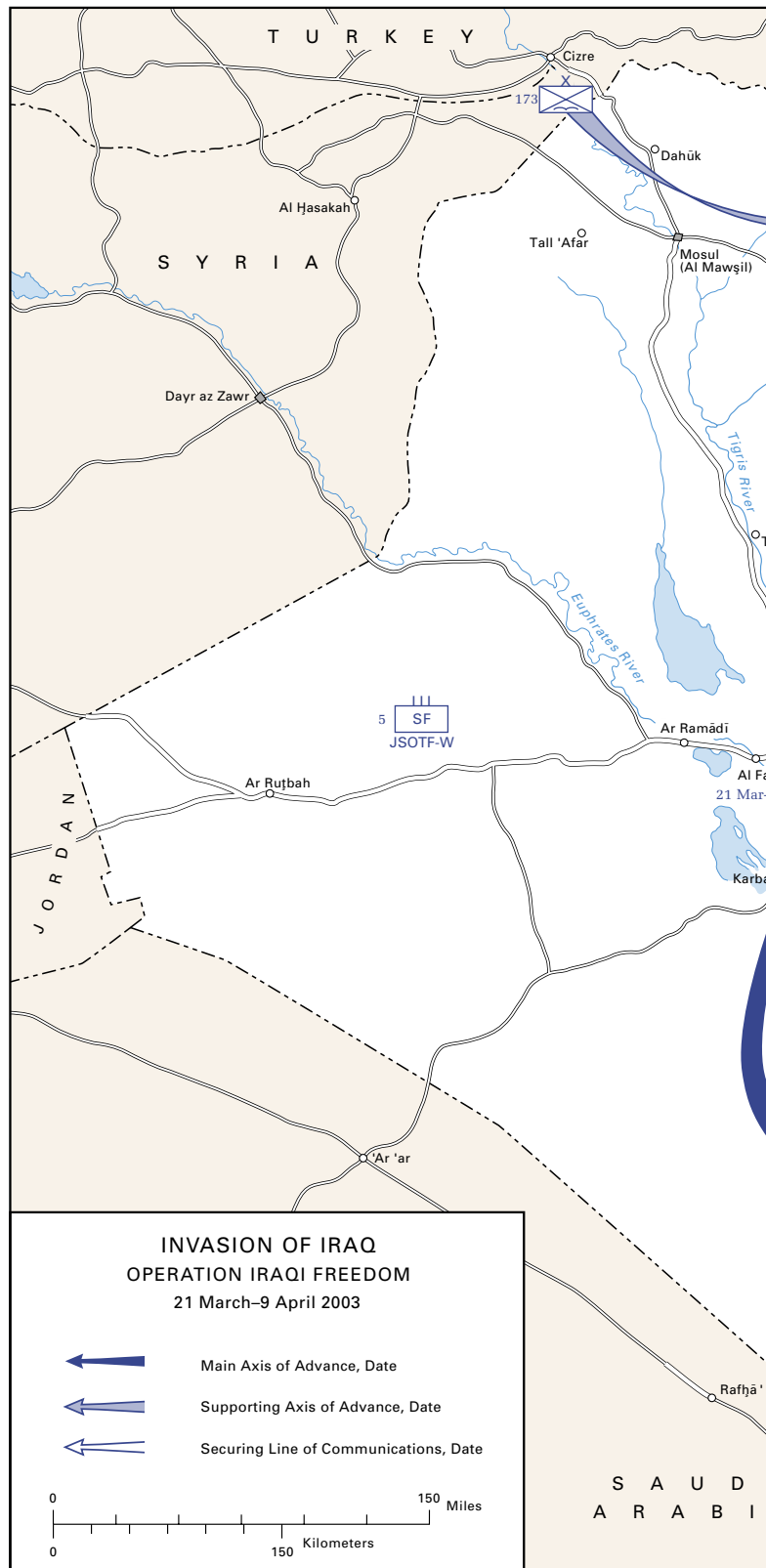
Americans had reacted to Saddam's provocations by bombing Iraq. DESERT FOX in December 1998 had featured four intense days of air and missile strikes; and when retaliating for potshots at planes enforcing the no-fly zones, the Americans had taken the opportunity to further dismantle Iraqi air defenses and communications systematically. Over twelve years many of the purposes an air campaign might otherwise have served had already been achieved through these operations, called NORTHERN WATCH and SOUTHERN WATCH. American ground forces were acclimatized for operations in Iraqi and poised for a rolling start. Since DESERT STORM they had repeatedly sped into theater to defend Kuwait against Saddam's provocations and had developed a routine deployment and training program labeled INTRINSIC ACTION that rotated robust battalion combat teams through rigorous exercises in the Kuwaiti desert. American soldiers had long since figured out how to get the best results out of themselves and their equipment in this harsh environment. Most of the soldiers who would cross the line of departure had already been living in the desert for some time as

diplomatic crises ebbed and flowed. Another argument for a rolling start lay in the memory of catastrophic damage retreating Iraqis had inflicted on Kuwaiti oil fields during DESERT STORM. If the coalition moved quickly enough on the ground this time, it could secure the nearby Rumaylah Oil Fields before Saddam Hussein could set them on fire. McKiernan gave his Marine Expeditionary Force an on-order mission to seize these oil fields within four hours of notification, and Special Operations Forces infiltrated to monitor and perhaps interfere with any attempts at demolition prior to the marines' arrival.

The final logic for the rolling start was fortuitous. Intelligence reports seemed confident that Hussein, his influential sons Uday and Qusay, and other regime leaders were in the same bunker at the same time and that the coalition knew where it was. The allies seized upon this opportunity to decapitate Saddam's regime with a single blow. Simultaneously, thirty-six Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) hit the complex early in the morning on March 20. Unfortunately, later reports proved that the intelligence was faulty: Hussein and his sons were not in the bunker. Further combat operations followed immediately, and the main bodies of the 3d Infantry Division, 1st Marine Division, and U.K. 7th Armoured Division were rolling across the line of departure within twenty-four hours.

The 3d Infantry Division streaked up the west side of the Euphrates River toward Baghdad, blowing through light resistance to cover 200-plus miles into the vicinity of Al Najaf within twenty-four hours. (*See Map 33.*) During this same period the marines overran the Rumaylah Oil Fields, handily mopping up fragments of defenders and securing the facilities virtually unscathed. The British captured 750 dispirited defenders of Umm Qasr without much of a fight and set about preparing that port to receive humanitarian supplies. Far to the west, the Special Forces already had infiltrated to compromise Iraqi efforts to launch missiles from western Iraq into Israel; to the north, special operators in Kurdistan had laid groundwork to bring the Kurds in as a second front. Most of this drama and activity was televised worldwide by the virtue of embedded media correspondents traveling within units yet linked to their home stations by satellite technology. Their real-time, gripping, and sometimes breathless commentary added to the sense of momentum and success.

Unfortunately, the campaign did not stay easy. Many had thought that overwhelming American air strikes would so shock and awe the Baghdad regime that it would quickly fold with minimal ground effort. The Iraqis anticipated the allied advantage, surrendered control of the air from the beginning, hid much of their valuable equipment amidst the civilian populace where the allies were loath to strike, and pushed deep underground what command and control they could sustain. The allies were far too sensitive to world opinion to risk serious damage to civilian infrastructure and instead used spectacular firepower on selected government buildings and military facilities. The Arab world recoiled from footage of massive plumes of smoke over the fabled city of Baghdad and of hapless civilian victims of occasional errant munitions, when in fact little real damage was being done to the city or its citizens. Strategic bombing was also doing little real damage to Iraqi warfighting capabilities. The air power that would matter would be joint and in support of the ground advance.



Map 33



Ground troops soon enough found themselves in need of the advantages air power could bring. Although the Iraqi regular army quickly faded from view south of Baghdad, by desertion more so than through combat or surrender, *Fedayeen* and *Special Republican Guards* counterattacked with vengeance. Attacks against lead elements of the 3d Infantry Division seem almost suicidal in retrospect. Swarms of pickup trucks mounting machine guns and packed with light infantry raced to close with the Americans, only to be swept away by hurricanes of tank and Bradley fire. Ambushes more rationally sited amidst buildings and vegetation were still speedily shredded by phenomenal American gunnery, the product of thermal sights, state-of-the-art equipment, and years of training. The heavy armor of the M1A1 tanks was proof against any munitions in the Iraqi inventory, and the lighter armor of the Bradleys protected their crews from most. Shootouts with American armor inevitably went badly for the Iraqis.

Unfortunately for the Americans, their armor could not be everywhere and their rapid advance had exposed a lengthy supply line. While some *Fedayeen* were demolishing themselves fighting lead elements in and around Najaf, their brethren were having somewhat better results attacking trailing logistical assets around An Nasiriyah. One maintenance company became misoriented in the twisted streets of that troubled town and lost 11 killed, 7 captured, and 9 wounded in a chaotic gun battle. The Iraqis presented the prisoners on television for the world to see, and pictures of dead bodies showed on that media as well. Marines rushed in to assist in securing An Nasiriyah found themselves embroiled in stiff fighting with wily and ruthless opponents and took significant casualties as well. The *Fedayeen* and other irregulars routinely dressed as civilians, pretended to surrender and then opened fire, hid among civilians, attacked from ambush, and operated out of hospitals, schools, and mosques. They knew and exploited the American rules of engagement. As major fighting ceased, they persisted with sniping and encouraged suicide attacks against isolated American checkpoints.

March 24, 2003, was a discouraging day for coalition arms. The damage inflicted upon the ambushed maintenance company was becoming clear, and attacks along the elongated supply lines continued. An Nasiriyah in particular remained a hotly contested scene of carnage and confusion. The 11th Aviation Group attempted a deep attack on

AMBUSH OF A CONVOY

The 507th Maintenance Company entered enemy territory unprepared for the type of combat it was about to face. On March 23, 2003, the company unwittingly drove through enemy positions at An Nasiriyah. So surprised were the Iraqi soldiers that they initially did not fire on the Americans and the 507th continued unscathed. Turning around, the lumbering column made its confusion obvious. The Iraqis, once fearful of American might, now saw easy targets. They began shooting; the surprised maintenance personnel fumbled with their weapons, with some jamming. The highway in An Nasiriyah became a gauntlet of fire. Sixteen Americans escaped, but eleven died and seven were captured in the worst single combat incident during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

the *Republican Guard Medina Division* defending Karbala and overflowed a mammoth air defense ambush of machine guns and shoulder-fired air-defense weapons coordinated by cellular telephones. Although all but one of the redoubtable AH-64 Apache helicopters made it out of the battle area, in one battalion only six of eighteen aircraft remained mission capable and in another only one. Weather reports anticipated the imminent arrival of a massive sandstorm, yielding several days of winds up to 50 knots and visibility measured in inches rather than miles. Such appalling weather conditions could negate American technical advantages and allow Iraqi attackers a close combat opportunity with American troops. Perhaps most troubling, Iraqi Shiites who had been so terribly abused during Saddam Hussein's regime did not rise to greet the allies as liberators but rather seemed to present an overall attitude of sullen indifference. Allied postwar plans depended heavily on Iraqi cooperation: If those most aggrieved with Hussein remained distant, what hope was there for an agreeable outcome? It was in this context of troubling surprises that V Corps Commander Lt. Gen. William S. Wallace made his now-famous remark that the Iraqis were "not the enemy we war-gamed against."

Wallace's remark was discouraging only to those who believed that wars are supposed to unfold as planned. Wallace's 34-year career included service as the Commander of the Operations Group and then Commanding General at the National Training Center, where he became acutely aware how often plans must change to accommodate a dynamic battlefield. His soldiers demonstrated that flexibility now. With respect to exposed logistics, within a few days V Corps drew on lessons learned in Vietnam and elsewhere—in some cases drawing on materials e-mailed from archives in the United States—to reconfigure convoys into a more defensible posture. Wallace resisted the temptation to redirect leading armored elements back into securing their own lines of communication and instead brought forward elements of the more lightly armed 101st Air Assault and 82d Airborne Divisions to deal with rear-area security. The 377th Theater Support Command pushed a hose-reel fuel system over fifty miles to the vicinity of An Nasiriyah, thus reducing the turnaround time for fuel-bearing trucks. This further capitalized upon a million-gallon fuel farm the Army had already quietly built up just short of the Iraq-Kuwait border. The 11th Aviation Group set about repairing or replacing shot-up aircraft, and their pilots conducted a video teleconference with the attack helicopter pilots of the 101st Airborne Division to discuss the innovative Iraqi defenses and to communicate lessons learned.

The 101st Division had more success with far less damage when their own opportunity for deep attacks came. The gigantic sandstorms did slow the American advance to a crawl and allowed some Iraqi *Fedayeen* and irregulars to get close, but these found the Americans as formidable close up as they had been at a distance. Even degraded thermal sights were better than the alternatives, and American gunners were quick on the trigger. American dismounts were well trained and organized, equipped with night-vision goggles, and heavily armed with automatic weapons. Perhaps most important, their newly improved Kevlar body armor was proof against fragments and munitions up through the ubiquitous 7.62-caliber round of the Iraqi AK-47. Dozens of American

Allied postwar plans depended heavily on Iraqi cooperation: If those most aggrieved with Hussein remained distant, what hope was there for an agreeable outcome?

Right: *Low Visibility during a Sandstorm in Southern Iraq.* Below: *Satan's Sandbox,* Elzie R. Golden, 2003.



infantrymen who would have been fatally wounded in earlier wars remained in the fight. The close-in battles that did occur were lopsided in the favor of the Americans.

With respect to Shiite reticence, the British pioneered a go-slow technique around Basra that developed insights useful elsewhere. The allies had a free hand in the open desert and could surround populated areas to enter them at their own pace. It turned out that the Shiites were not so much hostile to the allies as they were frightened of a Baathist hard core in their own midst. The British gathered intelligence on the surrounded population, conducted nighttime forays to neutralize identified

Baathists, and built the confidence of the Shiite remainder. Ultimately, the British, supported by the local populace, swept the Baathists out of Basra and entered the city as liberators. All things considered, the allies shifted their paradigm from the enemy that they had war-gamed against to the one they were actually fighting well.

Allied air power continued to hammer away at the Iraqis during all this adjustment. The rapid advance of the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) along the Euphrates and of the marines up the Tigris and between the rivers had drawn out the *Republican Guard* to defend the environs of Baghdad. They may have thought themselves concealed by the dust storm and by moving at night, but they were not. Satellites, unmanned aerial vehicles, and aerial reconnaissance detected their movements; Special Operations Forces and the leading ground forces established their front-line trace. Relentless air bombardment with PGMs seriously attrited the *Republican Guard* before it could achieve substantial ground contact with the Americans.

As vital as air power was to the advance from the south, it was even more instrumental to allied successes in the west and north. In the west, thinly supported Special Operations Forces quickly overran airfields and neutralized potential Iraqi missile strikes. Packing little organic firepower themselves, they depended heavily on aerial precision strikes to offset their shortcomings. In the north, the Air Force airdropped a reinforced battalion of the 173d Airborne Brigade, air-landed an M1A1 tank-equipped company team to support it, and then sustained this host and their Kurdish *Peshmerga* allies by air as well. Again much of the necessary fire support came from airborne PGMs. All these resources—tanks, paratroopers, *Peshmerga*, and PGMs—operated under the supervision of the handful of special operators already deployed in the north, inducing the Army's Vice Chief of Staff, General John ("Jack") M. Keane, to quip that it was like attaching a naval carrier battle group to a SEAL team. Operations in both west and north progressed well, while the climactic battle was shaping up in the south.

By April 4 the 3d Infantry Division had battered its way through the fragmenting *Republican Guard* to seize Saddam Hussein International Airport. Meanwhile, the marines had continued up the Tigris to cut off Baghdad from the east. (See Map 33.) The following day the 3d Infantry Division dispatched a brigade combat team on a raid into central Baghdad, taking advantage of the relatively open construction of major highways into the city. This foray turned into a spectacular media event as the tanks and Bradleys sped through town, blazing away to the left and right, destroying twenty armored vehicles, sixty-two trucks, and hundreds of troops while losing only four wounded in action themselves. Clearly, organized resistance was collapsing.

By April 7 the division had fought its way into central Baghdad to stay and the following day had closed to the Palestine Hotel in full view of the numerous international media who had set up operations there. The marines moved into the city from the other side, and the continuing rout of the Iraqis in the west and north completed the isolation of the now-fallen capital city. The campaign's cumulative casualties to that point were reported as 42 killed and 133 wounded for the Army, 41 killed and 151 wounded for the Marine Corps and 19 killed and 36 wounded for the British. On April 9 a tiny contingent of marines and a crowd of jubilant Iraqis pulled down the Saddam monument in the

THUNDER RUNS IN BAGHDAD

Urban combat can bog down armies, and the campaign to seize Baghdad in April 2003 required audacity to prevent a slow, set-piece battle. The American Army mounted two armored raids, nicknamed Thunder Runs. First, on April 5 an armored battalion attacked swiftly up Highway 8 into Baghdad and then withdrew. Two days later an entire heavy brigade of Abrams tanks and Bradleys roared into downtown Baghdad and stayed, fighting off all counterattacks. These raids—armored vehicles speeding down highways—brought mayhem: tanks blasting thin defenses, suicidal assaults on armor, and vast expenditures of ammunition on suspected enemy locations. They were a key element in toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein.

Shiite sector of Baghdad while breathless television commentary related the symbolism and decisiveness of the moment. It truly seemed that the war was over and a triumphant peace at hand.

Phase IV

Coalition planners had envisioned IRAQI FREEDOM as a multiphase operation, with Phase IV being the mop-up and reconstruction that followed the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime. The conduct of Phases I through III had been mindful of Phase IV; collateral damage to the civilian infrastructure had been kept to a minimum. Graphic photos and film footage revealed smoke pluming out of precisely drilled military targets while civilian buildings surrounding them remained untouched. Psychological operations repeatedly made the point that the war was against Hussein's regime and not the Iraqi people. Unlike most other wars, there was no sudden flight of panicked refugees. The Iraqis stayed where they were and by and large had sufficient food on hand to last them for a week or so. Many thought that the Iraqis would greet the Americans as liberators and that Phase IV would involve a modest and expedient expenditure of resources. Unfortunately, these optimists underrated the resilience of the Baathist regime, the complexity of the Iraqi national identity, and the deplorable conditions in which Hussein had left his country.

There was no precise end to Saddam Hussein's regime, no surrender, no cease-fire, no treaty. There was not much formal capitulation at lower levels either. By and large the Iraqi Army deserted and went home rather than surrendering en masse. Regime adherents disappeared back into the population but retained the means to intimidate it through threat, arson, and murder. The coalition resorted to the attention-getting tactic of associating a different key regime figure with each card in a deck of cards: Hussein, for example, was the Ace of Spades. In southern Iraq, the Shiites well remembered their abortive uprising against Hussein following DESERT STORM and the massacres they blamed in part on America's failure to assist at that time. They were understandably wary of cooperating too soon; Baathist diehards would have to be rooted out and an expectation of personal security established before cooperation could be expected. In central Iraq, Sunni Arabs had received favored treatment from Saddam's regime; his personal power base had been heavily concentrated in Tikrit and other small towns north and west of Baghdad. (*See Map 34.*) Here, the number of his adherents was larger and their grip on the population more profound than in the south. Only the Kurds in the far north had already virtually extinguished the Baathists in their midst and enthusiastically welcomed the Americans as liberators.

The Iraqi national identity was both fragmented and complicated. Profound tensions had long divided Shiites, Sunni Arabs, and Kurds; such smaller minorities as Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Turks had their share of historical grievances as well. Iraqis were overwhelmingly Muslim, mindful of centuries of oppression by foreign powers, and wary of if not outright hostile to a sustained American presence. Ethnic and political ties extended well beyond their borders, producing additional potential for mischief. Iran's fundamentalist Shia government appealed

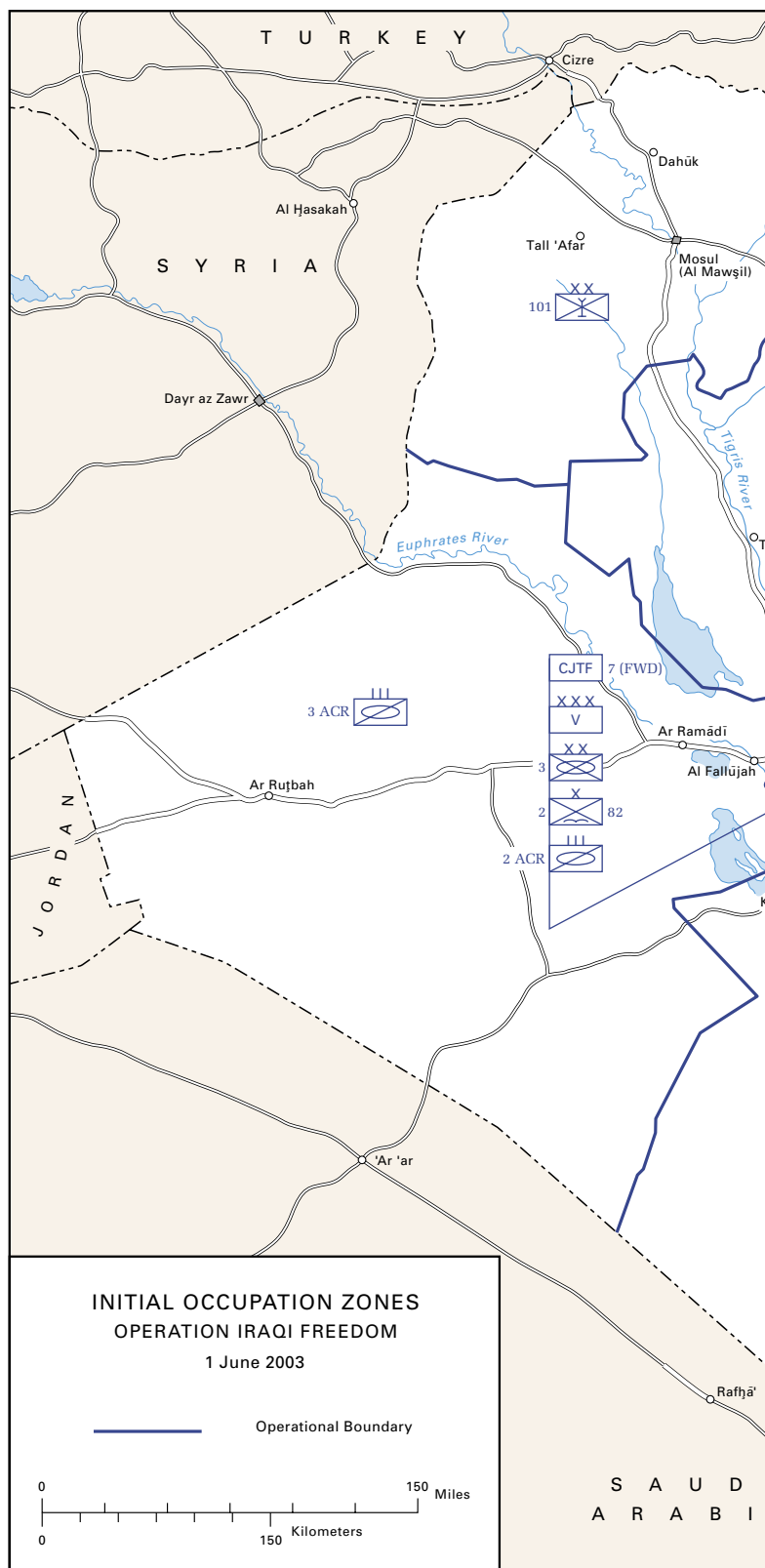
to many Iraqi Shiites, who constituted about 60 percent of the population. A number of prominent Shia leaders had waited out the worst of the Hussein years in exile in Iran and now returned with organizations of followers intact. Kurds lived in Turkey and Iran as well as in Iraq, and those nations worried that a prosperous and autonomous Kurdistan might inspire their own minorities to further separatism. Baathists were dominant in Syria as they had been in Iraq, and armed men flowed back and forth across that porous and troubled border. Pan-Arab hostility to the West was also at play in Iraq, and popular international media networks like *Al Jazeera* put a spin on news that did not favor the coalition allies and what they were trying to accomplish. This attitude garnered support from some for the use of foreign mercenaries, zealots, and terrorists, first to defend Hussein's regime and then, when it fell, to carry on the fight on the part of Baathist diehards or in addition to them.

Coalition objectives depended heavily on convincing the Iraqis that they were better off with Saddam Hussein gone. This effort was compromised initially by the sorry state of the country's infrastructure. Hussein's regime had more in common with gangster-like extortion and extraction than it did with responsible government. Saddam had looted the country of billions of dollars and plowed much of that back into magnificent palaces for himself and his family. Much was simply stashed away, some in overseas banks and some in great bundles of money coalition troops found hidden in walls, under floors, or in basements. Given UN sanctions following DESERT STORM and Saddam's fiscal style, the black-market economy was in many cases more robust than the conventional economy. Saddam's adherents lived well, but most of the population lived in poverty. Routine recapitalization of oil-producing, electricity-generating, and transportation infrastructures simply did not occur, and there was not enough private investment to support a healthy economy.

Iraq's economic dysfunction manifested itself in the paroxysmal looting associated with the regime's fall. As Saddam's security apparatus collapsed and the allies proved too few and too distracted to police the country, impoverished masses saw their one clear chance to seize something—anything—for themselves. Palaces were stripped of furniture, doorknobs, and electrical wire. Hospitals were stripped of diagnostic equipment and medical supplies. Power-transmission lines were toppled and the copper and other metals in them melted down for resale abroad. Government buildings were left as empty shells. There was no particular rhyme or reason for most of the looting. It was a simple orgy of the dispossessed stealing anything that could possibly be used or sold.



Infantrymen provide security near an essential bridge crossing south of Baghdad.



Map 34





A soldier of the 3d Infantry Division scans the rooftops in Baghdad as part of a patrol to deter looting.

Some of the damage was more sinister, however. In power stations and fuel refineries, coalition forces found evidence of sabotage as well as looting. Regime diehards so wanted coalition efforts to fail that they were willing to inflict untold further suffering on the Iraqi people.

Looting and lawlessness quickly tarnished the allied victory. The breath-taking success of the attack from a rolling start left a relatively tiny force in the midst of a vast country. Further troops had not yet arrived. Fighting continued on a small scale, and the relatively few units on hand necessarily took some time to transition from a warfighting posture to a security posture. In the interval lawlessness continued, with much of it more organized, violent, and criminal than had been the case earlier. Ordinary Iraqi citizens found themselves terrorized by tales of robbery, car theft, rape, and murder, many of which were true. Even when reinforced, American troops could not be everywhere. As they spread out to secure schools, hospitals, banks, and traffic-control points, they made themselves increasingly vulnerable to sniping and ambush by diehard Baathists.

The original plans for postwar Iraq had envisioned a modest reconstruction effort under retired Lt. Gen. James (“Jay”) Garner, the man who had supervised the reconstitution of Iraqi Kurdistan during Operation PROVIDE COMFORT. As the scale and intractable nature of the lawlessness, factional squabbling, and infrastructure collapse became clear, however, the need for a more comprehensive reconstruction effort became clear as well. Although some progress was being made, day after day the media reported electrical outages, fuel shortages, nonpotable water, crimes of violence, and attacks on American troops.

The Bush administration decided to upscale the reconstruction effort by devoting more resources and putting a prominent statesman favored by both the State Department and the Pentagon, L. Paul Bremer, in charge. Bremer determined early that half measures would not do and decided to totally disband the Iraqi Army and to ban a far larger proportion of Baathists from government employment than Garner

had considered wise. Iraq would not merely be tinkered with; it would be rebuilt from the ground up. Whatever the long-term advantages of such a dramatic renewal, the short-term effect was leaving large numbers of soldiers unemployed and Baathists desperate. Many of these Baathists had blood on their hands and knew what their fate would be if they gave up local levers of power. These men were fighting for their lives. Others saw livelihoods slipping away and believed they had nothing to lose by joining the diehards.

Iraqis continued to attack American tactical units but had no more success than they had during the course of earlier combat. Even when isolated, Bradley platoons generated volumes of fire that lightly armed assailants could not withstand, and armored reinforcements were generally close at hand. The residual Iraqi resistance soon turned its attention to sniping at convoys. Since most supplies still flowed into central Iraq from far-off Kuwait, there was no lack of convoys to choose from. The RPG was the Iraqi weapon of choice. If the attackers could pick off a truck or two from a distance, they could hope to escape before retaliation followed. The Americans tightened their convoy procedures, embedded tactical vehicles, gravitated toward routes with open shoulders, secured key terrain en route, and rehearsed countermeasures. Potshots at armed convoys became riskier, with fewer of the attackers getting away. Convoy security did become expensive, however. Bradleys escorting convoys began to average 1,200 miles a month rather than the customary 800 miles a year and thus had to change tracks every sixty days rather than biannually.

Rationalization of the American logistical structure in Iraq inevitably led to elaborate base camps, logistical support areas into which supplies of all types would muster. These and other facilities became the targets of daring mortar attacks as Baathists attempted to lob a few rounds into a base camp and then flee into the darkness. Infantry companies deployed to secure the base camps played cat and mouse to hunt down the mortarmen. At Logistics Support Activity (LSA) ANACONDA north of Baghdad, one enterprising Bradley company commander was in pursuit of the source of a recent mortar volley when a helicopter overhead reported a puzzling thermal hot spot on ground from which rounds were thought to have come. Returning to that location, the company commander unearthed a recently fired mortar from the soft sand. The Americans had been attempting to apprehend a mortar party fleeing in a pickup truck or on foot with their weapon, when instead the attackers had fired their weapon, buried it, and then drifted off unarmed. A quick search of the area revealed ten men hiding in a chicken coop. The local farmer who owned the chickens did not know the men, whom the Americans quickly apprehended. They unearthed two more mortars in the course of the night.



Fallujah, Elzie R. Golden, 2004



Desert Boots, 2003

Over time the preferred Iraqi method of attack shifted from direct fire and mortars, both increasingly dangerous to use, to improvised explosive devices. Often adapted from munitions or mines, these could be planted along roadways to detonate when run over or perhaps by remote control. A few men could employ such a device with relatively little risk to themselves. The devices were indiscriminant, however; as the American soldiers became warier and their vehicles more protected, the victims were often innocent Iraqis.

As grim as the Phase IV combat could occasionally be, it did not approach previous guerrilla warfare in scale or intensity. Even in the seemingly embattled Sunni region north and west of Baghdad, only a tiny fraction of the resident manpower engaged in active hostilities. The proportion of the population actively hostile and under arms was at least two orders of magnitude smaller than the American experience in Vietnam or the Russian experience in Afghanistan. American casualty rates were correspondingly smaller as well.

Resistance proved more akin to terrorism than to guerrilla warfare as most envision it. Foreign terrorists flowed into the country to join the fight. Soft targets such as unprotected oil pipelines, refineries, water mains, and the unarmed Iraqis attempting to restore them became popular for the terrorists. Attempts to assassinate Americans guarding hospitals, banks, and schools transitioned to attacks on the Iraqi security personnel who eventually replaced them. Even UN relief workers, who often eschewed American protection, came under attack. The most egregious such attack was a truck-bombing of a UN compound in September 2003 that killed at least twenty-three people, including Brazilian Vieira de Mello, the revered head of mission. The terrorists were determined to reverse whatever progress Iraq was making in the direction the coalition preferred, regardless of the suffering the Iraqi



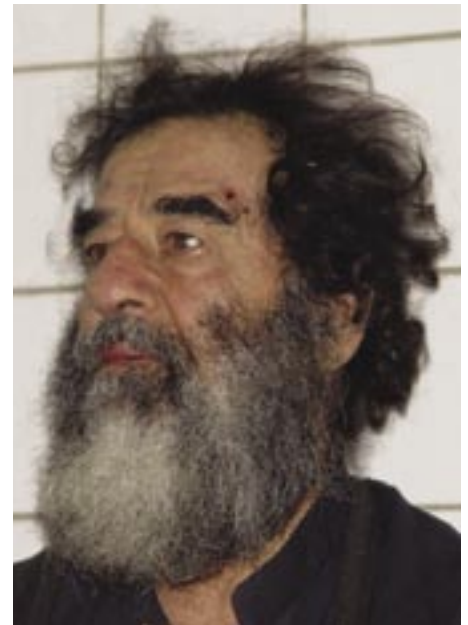
Street Fight, Elzie R. Golden, 2004

people would endure. The terrorists also aimed for purely civilian targets, both to reinforce a sense of insecurity and to promote trouble between the ethnic groups. Horrific suicide bombings of Shiite pilgrims and Kurdish well-wishers on respective religious holidays were cases in point.

The American response remained vigorous and attempted a balance between developing rapport with and support from the average Iraqi and smashing diehard Baathists and terrorists. Across most of the country, schools and hospitals were functioning normally within a few months. Local councils, some elected and some appointed, took on most aspects of local governance. Iraqi police and security guards progressed from coalition-sponsored training through joint patrols with the allies to assuming full responsibility. With policemen back on the streets, the worst of the crime wave subsided. By September over 60,000 Iraqis were employed in coalition-sponsored security activities, and many local leaders had their own tribal or clan militias or contingents of personal bodyguards. American soldiers were happy when they no longer found themselves pulling guard in front of schools, banks, hospitals, and museums or enforcing traffic control or curfews—where they felt like sitting ducks. This freed them for other missions.

If the carrot was such nation-building activities, the stick was nighttime raids to seize Baathist diehards and terrorist imports. With persistent coalition presence, intelligence improved as a population more confident in its own security became confident enough to inform. One by one, regime adherents identified on the deck of cards fell into coalition hands. Saddam's sons Uday and Qusay perished in a spectacular shootout. Foreign mercenaries were apprehended en route from the borders, flush with cash they had been paid to kill Americans. Tons of weapons and ammunition were uncovered and destroyed. On December 14, 2003, American soldiers pulled Saddam Hussein himself out of a tiny hole in which he was hiding near his hometown of Tikrit. They found valuable documents with him, and bit by bit the Baathist terrorist infrastructure was further disassembled and destroyed. Whatever Iraq's future, Saddam Hussein's regime was a thing of the past.

President Bush had uneven results in attempting to garner international support for his efforts. As of October 2003 the British sustained a division in Iraq and the Poles, Italians, Spaniards, Ukrainians, and a few others each contributed yet another, coming to about 30,000 allied troops as compared to 146,000 Americans. To this add 60,000 Iraqis by that time assisting in coalition-sponsored security. Financial support was problematic, and Bush presented a bill for \$87 billion to the U.S. Congress. Many nations did agree to forgive much of Iraq's foreign debt, removing a major obstacle to eventual recovery. Costs in lives and treasure proved contentious as a political issue, exacerbated by a failure to find the weapons of mass destruction so prominent in the original logic for the war. Nations not yet participating indicated an unwillingness to do so without a more substantial role for the United Nations in rebuilding postwar Iraq, yet there was no guarantee they would be forthcoming with troops and money even if that larger UN role was arranged. For better or worse, the United States had to continue the struggle or face incalculable international consequences.



Hussein Shortly after His Capture in Tikrit



General Schoomaker

Transforming While at War

The campaign requirements of the Global War on Terrorism understandably had an effect upon Army Transformation. Generals Gordon R. Sullivan, Dennis J. Reimer, and Shinseki (in the first half of his tenure) had believed that they were in an interval between wars and that they had been afforded an opportunity to prepare for the next one. Operations in Latin America and the Balkans and security requirements around the globe needed daily attention, but the lion's share of their focus could be on the future. Prolonged campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq forced current operations back into top priority, and new balances had to be struck if the Army was to maintain momentum toward transformation.

By the time General Peter J. Schoomaker became Army Chief of Staff in the summer of 2003, there already was considerable fluidity between the test-bed 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized) experimenting with the most modern digital technologies, the Interim Brigade Combat Teams anticipating Shinseki's Objective Force, and the larger army in the field. Appliqué versions of many of the advances were available to improve upon legacy equipment. Schoomaker's experience was grounded heavily in the Special Operations community with its marked ability to draw off-the-shelf technology for immediate use. Shinseki's Transformation Campaign Plan had, of course, been a forcing function to generate technology to draw upon, especially as more money became available in times of crisis. Believing the term Objective Force implied a neatness of time frames that would be impossible to sustain under wartime circumstances, Schoomaker dropped the use of the terms Objective Force, Interim Force, and Legacy Force in the favor of Current Force and Future Force, while maintaining most of Shinseki's program intact. The Army was no longer in an interval between wars, and technical advances would be applied as quickly as was practical. Development of the Future Combat System (FCS) would continue, but innovations intended for it would be applied to vintage vehicles as well, when practical.

The Operation IRAQI FREEDOM experience related by Lt. Col. John W. Charlton, Commander of Task Force 1/15 Mechanized Infantry, offers a graphic example of migrations of technology from selected units to the Legacy Force at large, in this case the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized). Contractors had adapted the full-up Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Battalion (FBCB2) digital system into a simplified version, called the BLUEFOR tracking system, and installed it in key leader vehicles throughout the division. As Charlton's task force first rolled into combat, he gave little attention to the small screen installed in his turret and instead relied on the old standby of 1:100,000 map sheets—thirteen of them mounted on 18x24-inch map boards with task force graphics superimposed.

This worked satisfactorily, even with interruptions when crossing from one map sheet to another while on the move, until the task force was drawn into an unexpected hot fight for the town of As Samawa. The 1:100,000-scale maps had no usable detail of As Samawa as an urban area; the task force had no overhead imagery of it either, since it had not intended to fight there. FBCB2, on the other hand,

FUTURE COMBAT SYSTEM

The FCS is an unprecedented program to develop and field the majority of a brigade-level unit's combat equipment as a single, integrated package. Its most visible component is the FCS family of combat vehicles, which share a common chassis to reduce logistics requirements. The FCS plan also includes highly innovative unmanned reconnaissance platforms and networked computers to provide soldiers and commanders with an unparalleled awareness of a battlefield.

offered digital imagery allowing the viewer to zoom in and out and appreciate the streets in whatever scale. A few days later the task force was caught in the huge sandstorm south of Baghdad. With visibility near zero, vehicles with FBCB2 were nevertheless able to navigate through the sandstorm, following their own plot on the screen as they worked around obstacles and key terrain. For the rest of the campaign Charlton never used another paper map product. As the campaign progressed, such digital technology became so popular, pervasive, and generally used that the theater as a whole became concerned with lack of sufficient satellite communications bandwidth to accommodate all users. The experience nevertheless underscored the pace at which the current force could take advantage of developments intended for the future force.

Technology was not the only venue for transformation efforts, of course. Another was achieving an appropriate balance in the expectations of the reserve components. Since the Vietnam War, the National Guard and the organized reserve had increasingly transitioned from being an inventory of mobile units that could reinforce the active component in due course to being enablers that rounded out the active component's capabilities and were essential for its success from early in an operation. Since DESERT STORM, the reserve components had consistently deployed as an important fraction of every major mission and had even routinely assumed some overseas missions.

Since 9-11 large numbers had been called up for homeland security and for operations overseas, with the mobilization being particularly large and lengthy in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. By September 2003, 144,000 National Guardsmen and reservists were on duty, with 28,000 of these mobilized for homeland security. Manpower requirements in Iraq dictated a twelve-month tour actually in that country, more than doubling the six-month mobilization many had come to expect. Many reserve component soldiers were mobilized for two years. Not without a sense of humor, a number of reservists in Iraq made national television with a battle-weathered truck sporting the jaunty slogan, "One Weekend a Month—My Ass!!!" Clearly, the operational tempo was muddying the distinction between service in the active and reserve components. Soldiers who thought they had volunteered in cases of major national emergency now found themselves continually on call. The Army had to reexamine the force structures, roles, and missions of the reserve components if recruiting was to sustain itself in an atmosphere of trust.

The reserve components were challenged not only by the sheer numbers being called up, but also by departures from familiar systems whereby mobilizations and movements were managed and tracked. During the Cold War, contingency planning had been dominated by the expectation of gigantic slugfests in Central Europe and Korea. Comprehensive war plans identified the units involved in elaborate detail and gave each an appropriate mission. Courses of action were supported by an automated time-phased force deployment list (TPFDL) that assured an appropriate mix of combat, combat support, and combat service support units throughout a buildup and married deploying units and transportation in the most efficient manner. TPFDL was the apotheosis of detailed planning, and therefore a bit cumbersome: once initiated, it ran on like a vast and not particularly compromising machine.

The executors of IRAQI FREEDOM wanted more internal flexibility than TPFDL tended to allow. In some cases, for political reasons, they wanted force packaging to restrict overall force flow, accelerate the arrival of some types of units, decelerate the arrival of other types of units, and rapidly adjust deployment sequences as circumstances suggested. Enormous strides with respect to information management, the argument went, should enable far more flexibility with respect to force flow. Unfortunately, dramatic changes on short notice in the midst of a wartime deployment did not work well. The finite physical hardware of airlift and sealift could not morph as quickly as force packages could be redesigned; hasty reconfigurations typically did not allow for appropriate combat service support; and the imbroglio of not being allowed to move through Turkey put additional stress on an already challenged deployment. To many a guardsman and reservist, the result seemed to be chaos, with soldiers mobilized in accordance with the TPFDL waiting idly for weeks or months, rushing overseas only to find they had not been time-phased with the arrival of their equipment, or finding an imbalance between the scope of their mission and the resources available. The situation got worse when troops already away from their jobs and families for months awaiting deployment were told they would have to stay at least a year in Iraq to meet force requirements.

The inconveniences associated with the abandonment of TPFDL underscored another of Schoomaker's priorities, the development of more modular units. For generations the combined-arms framework of choice had been the division. The division had been the lowest level at which one had a robust representation of all branches and services assigned and could optimize the synergy of working them together. It was also the lowest level at which significant joint operations were feasible. This worked well when one's adversary was also a massive multidivisional force. The experiences in the Balkans and Afghanistan and during IRAQI FREEDOM suggested the need to deploy smaller, nimbler, self-contained units—tactical and operational “small change”—to fit contingency circumstances. Reimer and then Shinseki had experimented with alternate possibilities. The combined-arms framework of choice came to be the brigade combat team, a development that Schoomaker approved; this was intended to be nimbler than the brigade combat team of yore. Subordinate units would be trained to a high standard, and training would include the expectations of quickly mixing and

The experiences in the Balkans and Afghanistan and during IRAQI FREEDOM suggested the need to deploy smaller, nimbler, self-contained units—tactical and operational “small change”—to fit contingency circumstances.

matching units to achieve precisely tailored solutions at any point on the combat spectrum.

The notion of smaller, nimbler, highly trained units tracked with yet another transformation, unit manning. Since 1907 the U.S. Army had relied on individual replacements to keep units up to strength overseas and in turbulent or casualty-prone circumstances. The system had its advantages and disadvantages. Its critics argued that constant back-and-forth movement of unit personnel degraded unit cohesion and guaranteed a rapid loss of the value added by combat experience or training. A half-dozen times since World War II, the Army had experimented with systems featuring unit manning and rotation, wherein soldiers stayed together as a unit for a long time and deployed together, without success for various reasons. The emphasis on modularity, the nature and scale of recurrent deployments overseas, and improvements in airlift and sealift all seemed to argue for yet another attempt to make unit manning work. The smaller, nimbler, superbly equipped and painstakingly trained units of the transformed Army should profit from the further cohesion unit manning would bring.

Conclusion

By the end of 2003 the U.S. Army had been committed to the Global War on Terrorism for two years. During that period, broad post-Cold War preparations for indeterminate operations against yet-to-be-specified enemies at unknown times focused quickly on specific adversaries and identified missions. Imposed regime changes in Afghanistan and Iraq were violent, swift, and irreversible. In the course of them American soldiers demonstrated exceptional tactical finesse while ably employing the latest in military technology. After these regimes fell, the Army inherited security requirements that were complex, arduous, and of indeterminate duration. In the course of these, technical advantages counted for less and perseverance for more in achieving national objectives. Active campaigning in Iraq and Afghanistan coincided with heavy involvement in homeland security and in smaller operations—some essentially military, but most not—throughout much of the world. The Army was at war. The Army also was transforming itself while at war, attempting to make ready for the next adversary even while coping with the current ones. The Global War on Terrorism and Army Transformation would proceed apace, and there seemed to be no near-term closure for either effort.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What impact did the events of September 11, 2001, have on the U.S. Army? How ready was the Army to respond to the initial challenges of the Global War on Terrorism? How does this war increase the need for joint operations?

2. What was the key to success in Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM? How did the small numbers of U.S. ground troops in Afghanistan achieve such a quick result, and what can we learn from that success?

3. To what extent was the invasion of Iraq justified by the Global War on Terrorism? What were some other reasons for our attack on Iraq, and how persuasive were they?

4. The rapid military success of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM was followed by the extensive involvement of the Army in peacekeeping, occupation duties, and nation building. To what degree are these appropriate roles for our Army?

5. To what extent does the Army role in the homeland security of the United States blur the lines of authority between strictly military and civic authorities in domestic affairs? What are some of the dangers of greater military involvement in such matters?

6. In what ways and how well did allies and alliances play in the Global War on Terrorism?

7. How has the Global War on Terrorism affected the continuing Army Transformation?

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